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✓ Latest release

Monthly Employee Earnings Indicator

Experimental estimates of employee earnings and jobs, sourced from Single Touch Payroll (STP) data

Reference period March 2026

Released 20/05/2026

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Key statistics

In March 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers totalled \$110,560 million,

- increasing by 1.4% or \$1,490 million in the month from February 2026
- increasing by 6.0% or \$6,247 million in the year from March 2025
- representing payments to 15.5 million employee jobs

As a measure of aggregate earnings and employee jobs, estimates presented in this release include compositional changes in the labour market, which are described in more detail in [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

National

The total wages and salaries paid by employers reached a series high in March 2026.

Since December 2025, wages and salaries growth has followed typical seasonal patterns, decreasing in January then increasing in February through March.

The January fall generally reflects reduced business activity over the holiday period, while the February and March rises are driven by the resumption of activity and cyclical bonus payments.

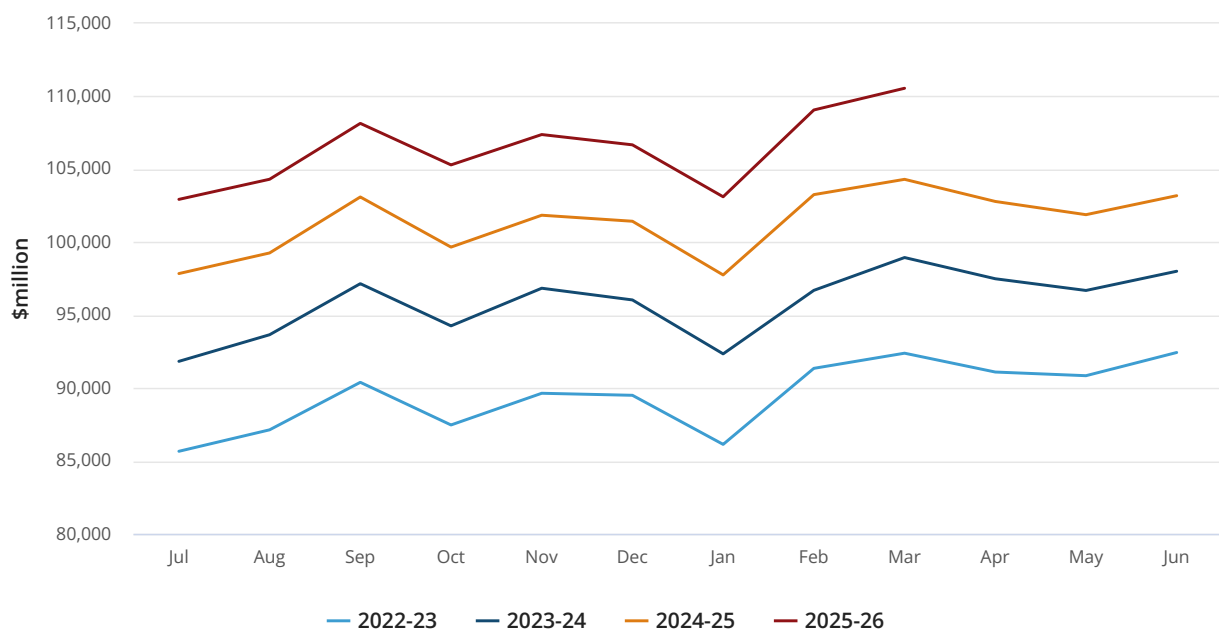
Month key statistics

	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26
Wages and salaries paid by employers			
Month change (%)	-3.3	5.8	1.4
Annual change (%)	5.5	5.6	6.0
Total wages and salaries (\$m)	103,116	109,070	110,560
Employee jobs			
Month change (%)	-1.5	1.5	1.2
Annual change (%)	1.3	1.2	1.0
Total employee jobs ('000)	15,058	15,286	15,470

Wages and salaries estimates are presented as an original series with calendar-adjustment, to account for the differing number of days in each month, as seasonally adjusted estimates are not yet available.

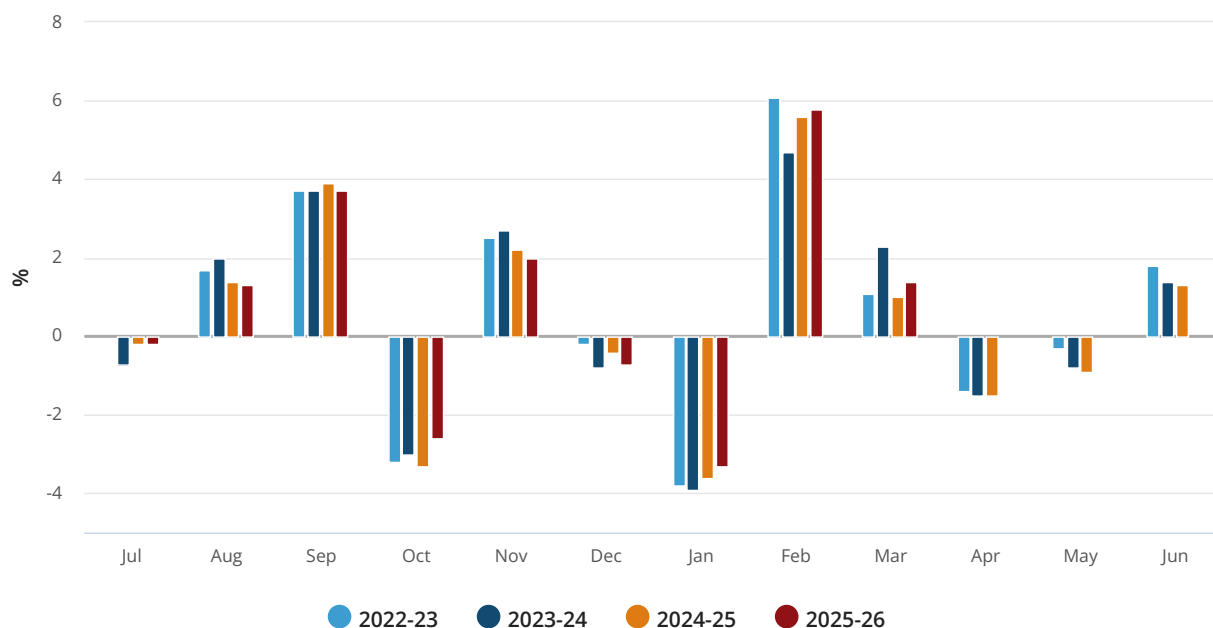
Estimates of change throughout this release are calculated using un-rounded values. They may differ from, though are more accurate than change calculated from rounded values.

Total wages and salaries paid by employers (a)



a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers (a)



a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/Mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\).](#).

Quarter change

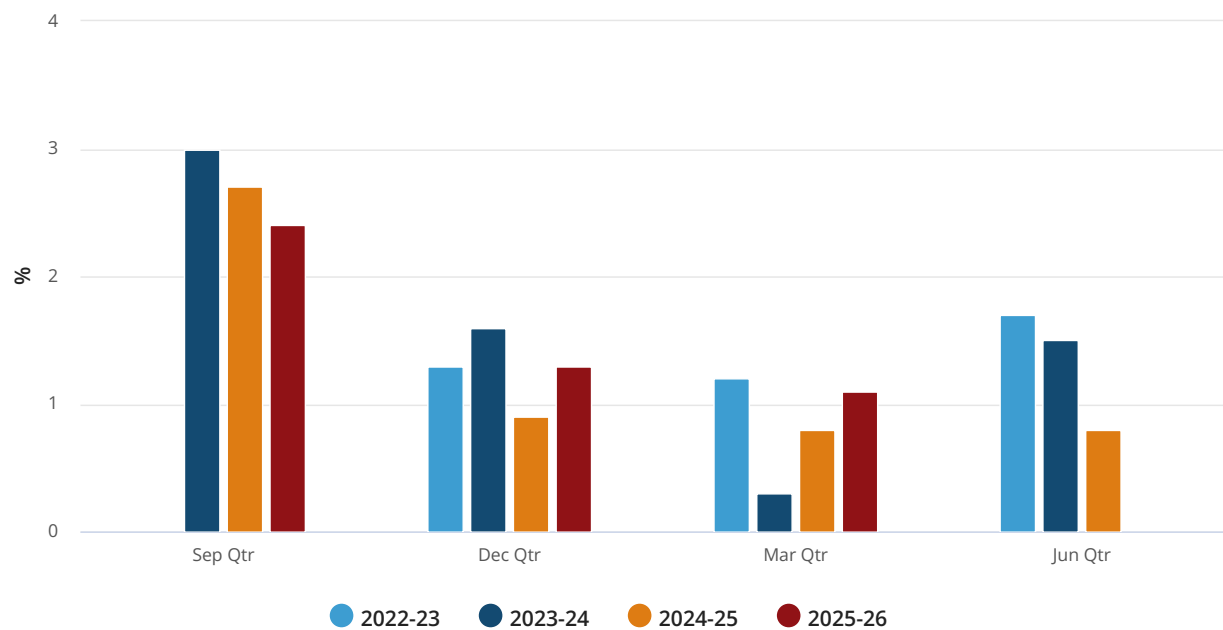


Current compilation methods do not support the production of a quarterly employee jobs estimate.

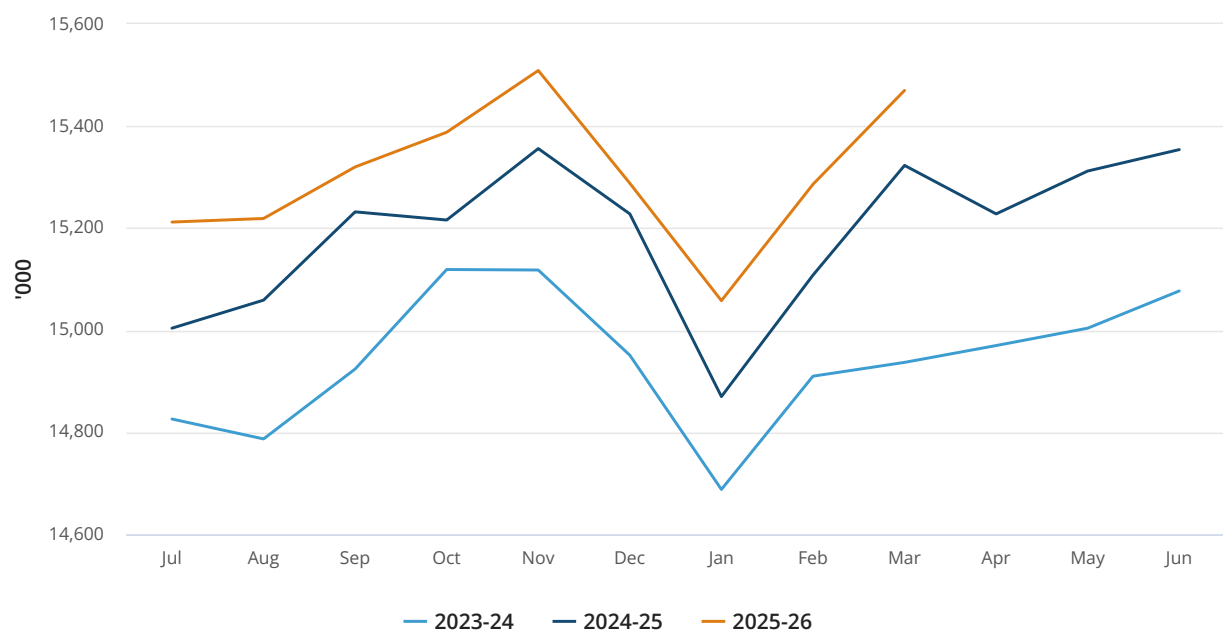
Quarter key statistics

	Mar Qtr 25	Jun Qtr 25	Sep Qtr 25	Dec Qtr 25	Mar Qtr 26
Quarter change (%)	0.8	0.8	2.4	1.3	1.1
Annual quarter change (%)	6.0	5.4	5.1	5.4	5.7
Total wages and salaries (\$m)	305,332	307,875	315,407	319,367	322,745

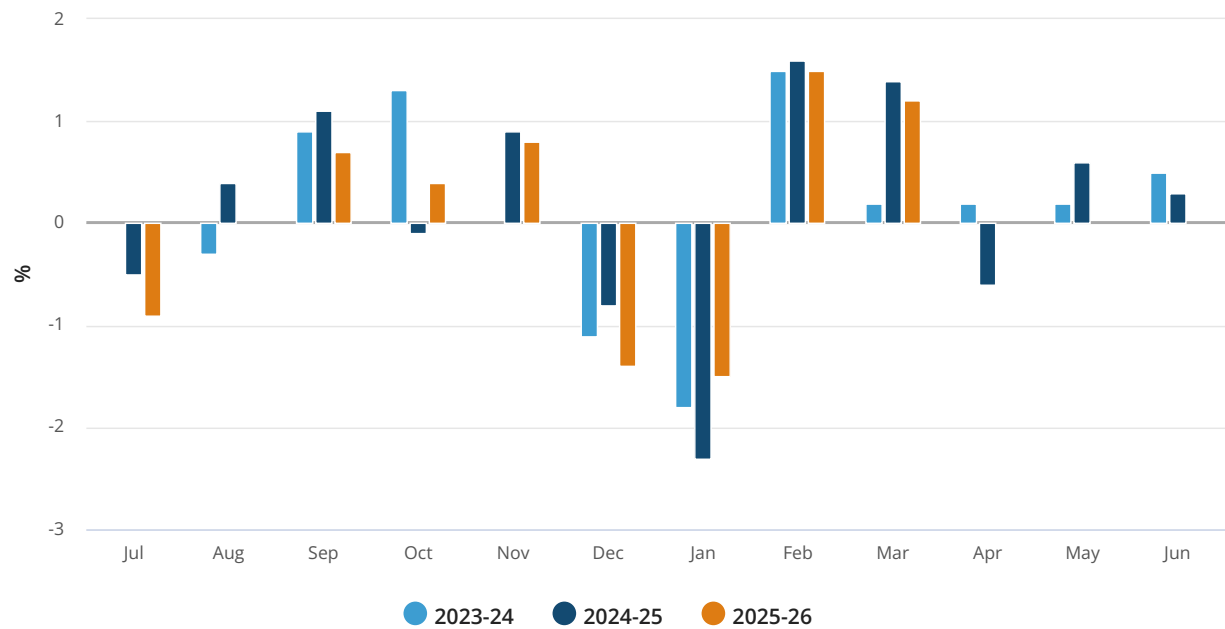
Quarter change in total wages and salaries paid by employers



Total employee jobs



Month change in employee jobs



State and territory

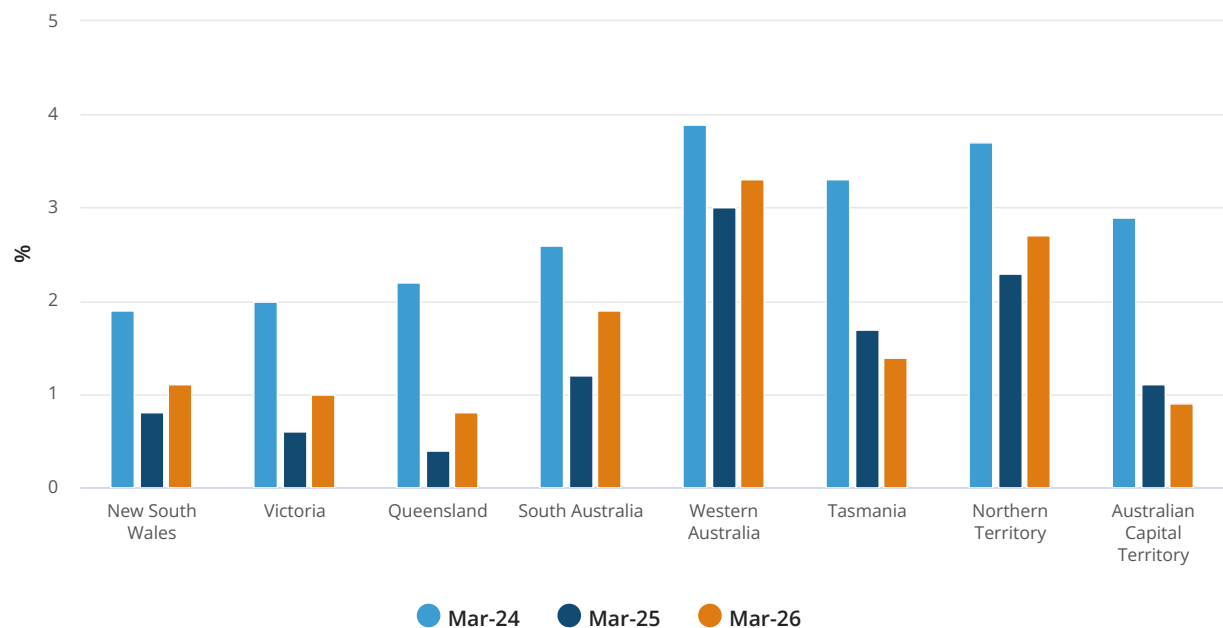
In March 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in all states and territories from February 2026.

Western Australia saw the largest increase of \$443m and +3.3%, driven by cyclical bonuses paid within the Mining industry.

Total wages and salaries paid by employers, by state and territory

	Jan-26 (\$m)	Feb-26 (\$m)	Mar-26 (\$m)
New South Wales	33,653	35,784	36,189
Victoria	25,311	26,837	27,106
Queensland	19,954	21,025	21,197
South Australia	6,129	6,377	6,499
Western Australia	12,541	13,362	13,805
Tasmania	1,765	1,833	1,859
Northern Territory	1,055	1,101	1,130
Australian Capital Territory	2,706	2,752	2,776
Australia	103,116	109,070	110,560

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by state and territory (a)



a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

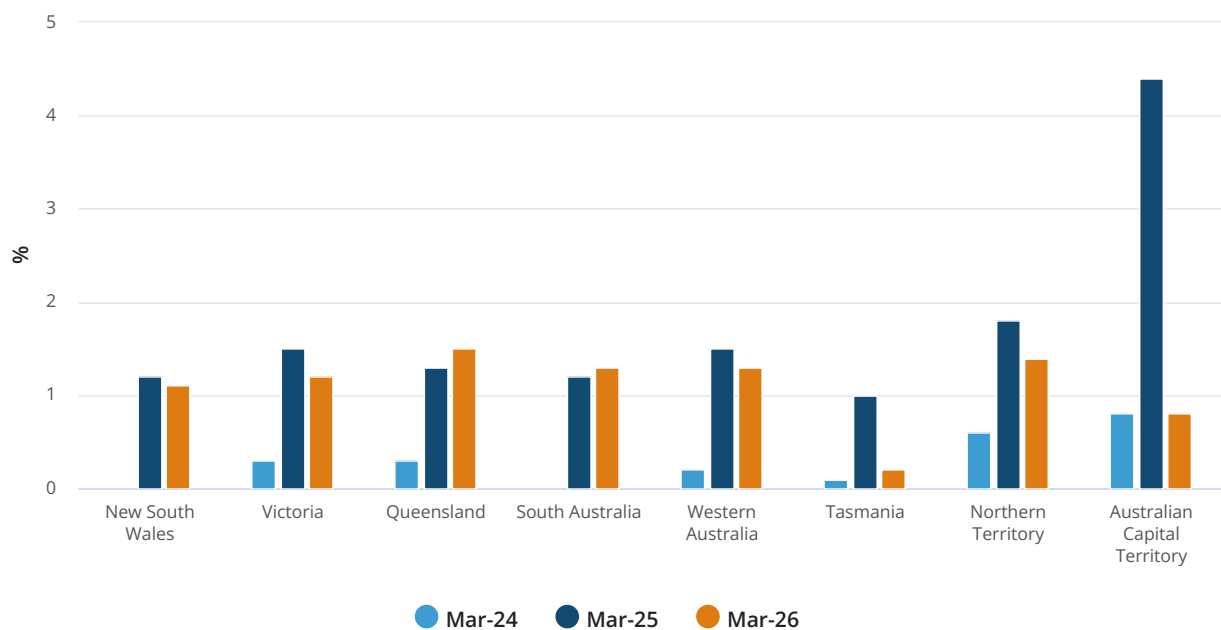
In March 2026, employee jobs increased in all states and territories from February 2026.

New South Wales saw the largest increase of 50,700 employee jobs or +1.1%.

Employee jobs, by state and territory

	Jan-26 ('000)	Feb-26 ('000)	Mar-26 ('000)
New South Wales	4,764	4,826	4,876
Victoria	3,858	3,932	3,979
Queensland	3,004	3,044	3,090
South Australia	972	984	997
Western Australia	1,689	1,714	1,736
Tasmania	295	299	299
Northern Territory	144	147	149
Australian Capital Territory	334	341	344
Australia	15,058	15,286	15,470

Month change in employee jobs, by state and territory (a)



a. Temporary roles created ahead of the May 2025 federal election contributed to higher month change in the Australian Capital Territory in March 2025.

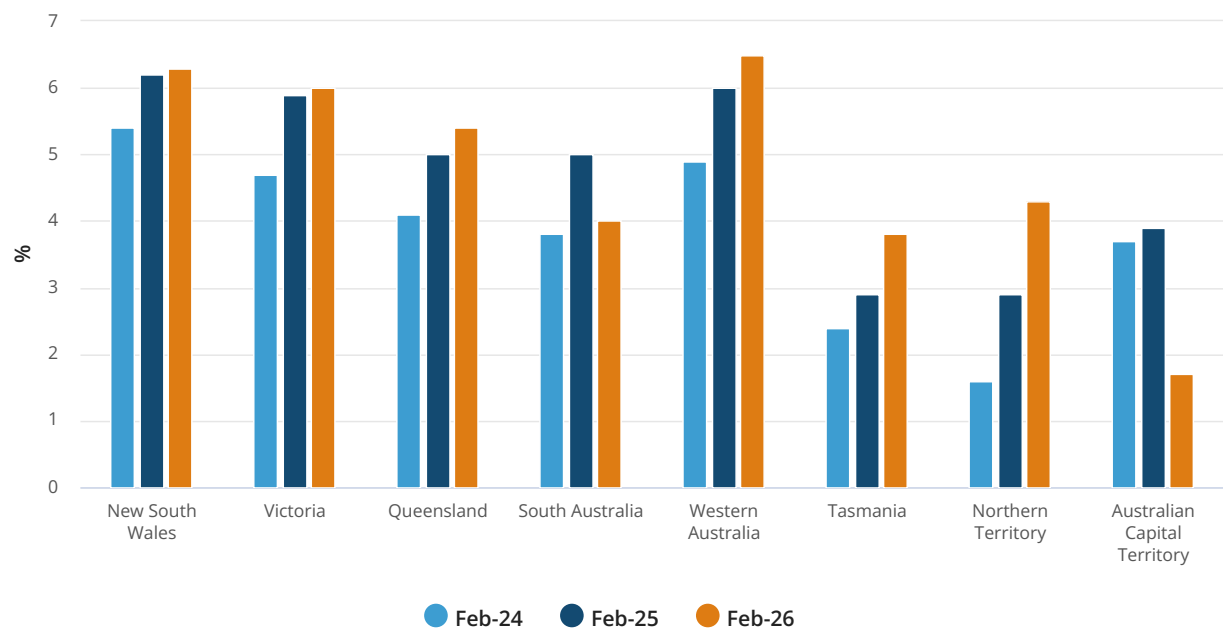
Month change, February



In February 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in all states and territories from January 2026.

New South Wales saw the largest increase of \$2,130m or +6.3%, driven by cyclical bonuses paid within the Financial and insurance services and Professional, scientific and technical services industries.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by state and territory (a)

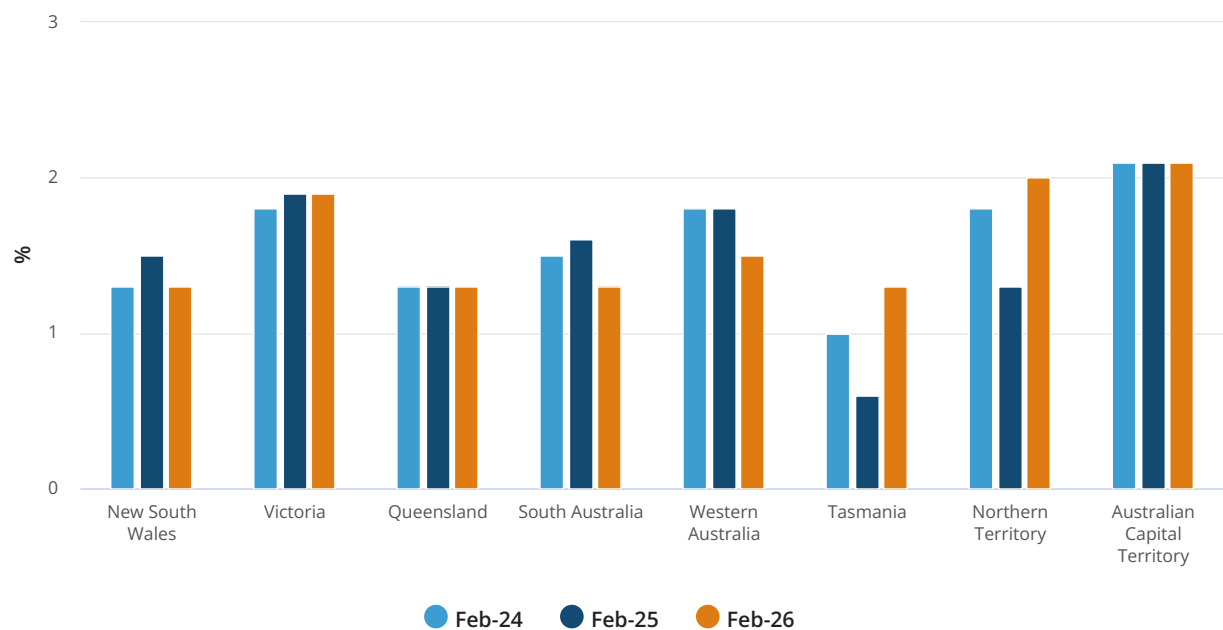


a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation. \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#)

In February 2026, employee jobs increased in all states and territories from January 2026.

Victoria saw the largest increase of 74,300 employee jobs or +1.9%.

Month change in employee jobs, by state and territory



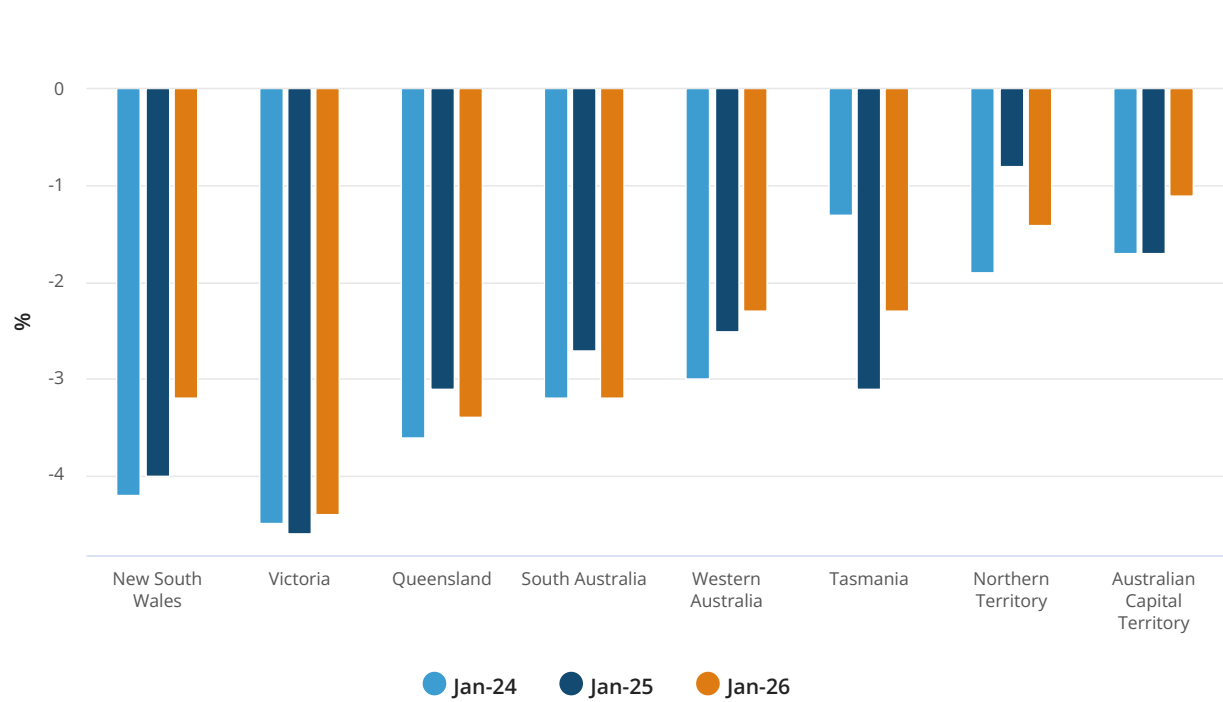
Month change, January



In January 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers decreased in all states and territories from December 2025.

Victoria saw the largest decrease of \$1,166m and -4.4%, due to reduced activity within the Education and training industry during the holiday period.

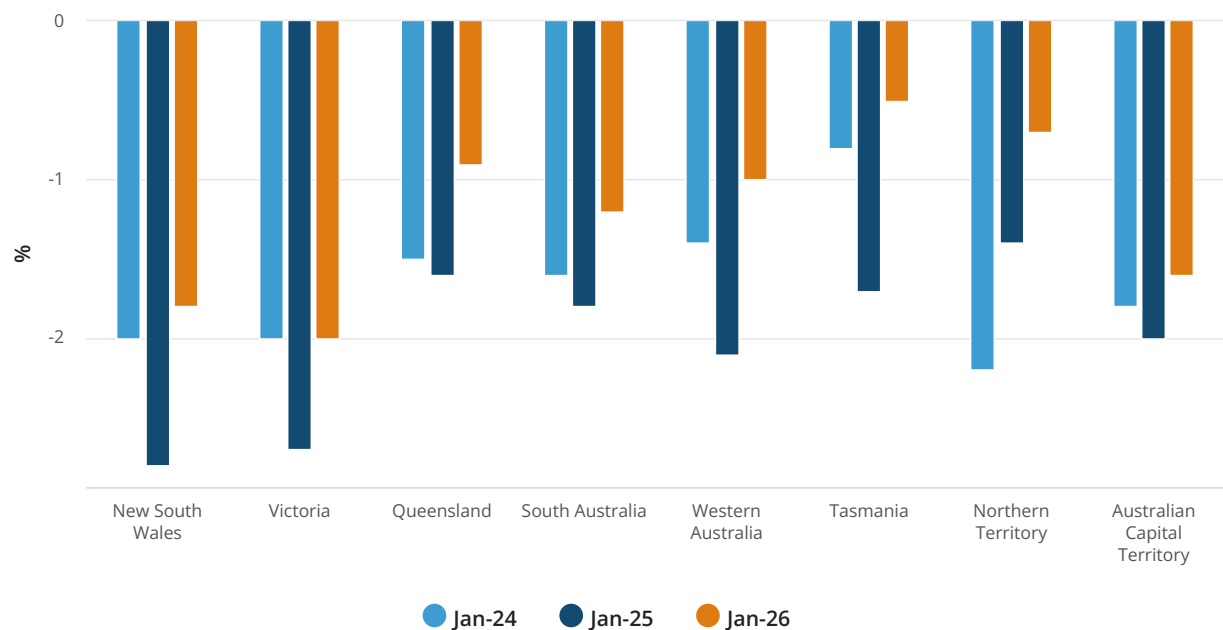
Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by state and territory



In January 2026, employee jobs decreased in all states and territories from December 2025.

New South Wales saw the largest decrease of 89,200 employee jobs or -1.8%.

Month change in employee jobs, by state and territory



Industry

In March 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in 15 of 19 industries from February 2026.

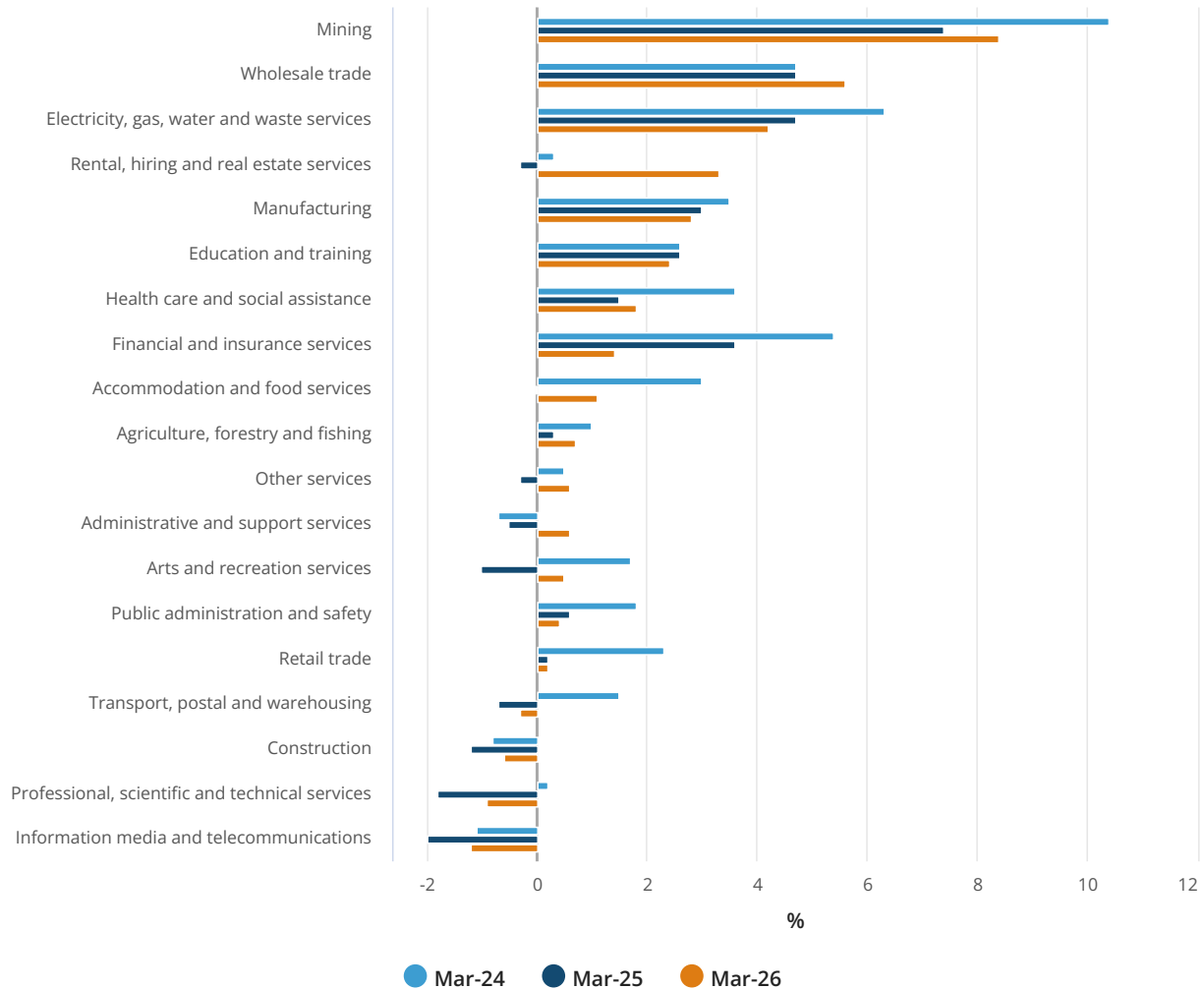
Mining saw the largest increase of \$339m and +8.4%, driven by cyclical bonuses.

Total wages and salaries paid by employers, by industry

	Jan-26 (\$m)	Feb-26 (\$m)	Mar-26 (\$m)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,115	1,160	1,169
Mining	3,548	4,042	4,381
Manufacturing	6,260	6,755	6,947
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	1,697	1,790	1,866
Construction	8,715	9,561	9,508
Wholesale trade	4,688	5,063	5,344
Retail trade	6,010	6,079	6,093
Accommodation and food services	3,751	3,753	3,795
Transport, postal and warehousing	4,284	4,477	4,463
Information media and telecommunications	2,031	2,240	2,214
Financial and insurance services	5,865	6,514	6,603
Rental, hiring and real estate services	2,132	2,241	2,316
Professional, scientific and technical services	11,039	12,004	11,890
Administrative and support services	5,712	6,248	6,284
Public administration and safety	8,542	8,610	8,645
Education and training	7,615	8,200	8,400
Health care and social assistance	16,018	16,090	16,375
Arts and recreation services	1,162	1,198	1,203
Other services	2,933	3,045	3,064

	Jan-26 (\$m)	Feb-26 (\$m)	Mar-26 (\$m)
All industries	103,116	109,070	110,560

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by industry (a) (b)



a. Industries are ranked by descending month change in March 2026.

b. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

In March 2026, employee jobs increased in all industries from February 2026.

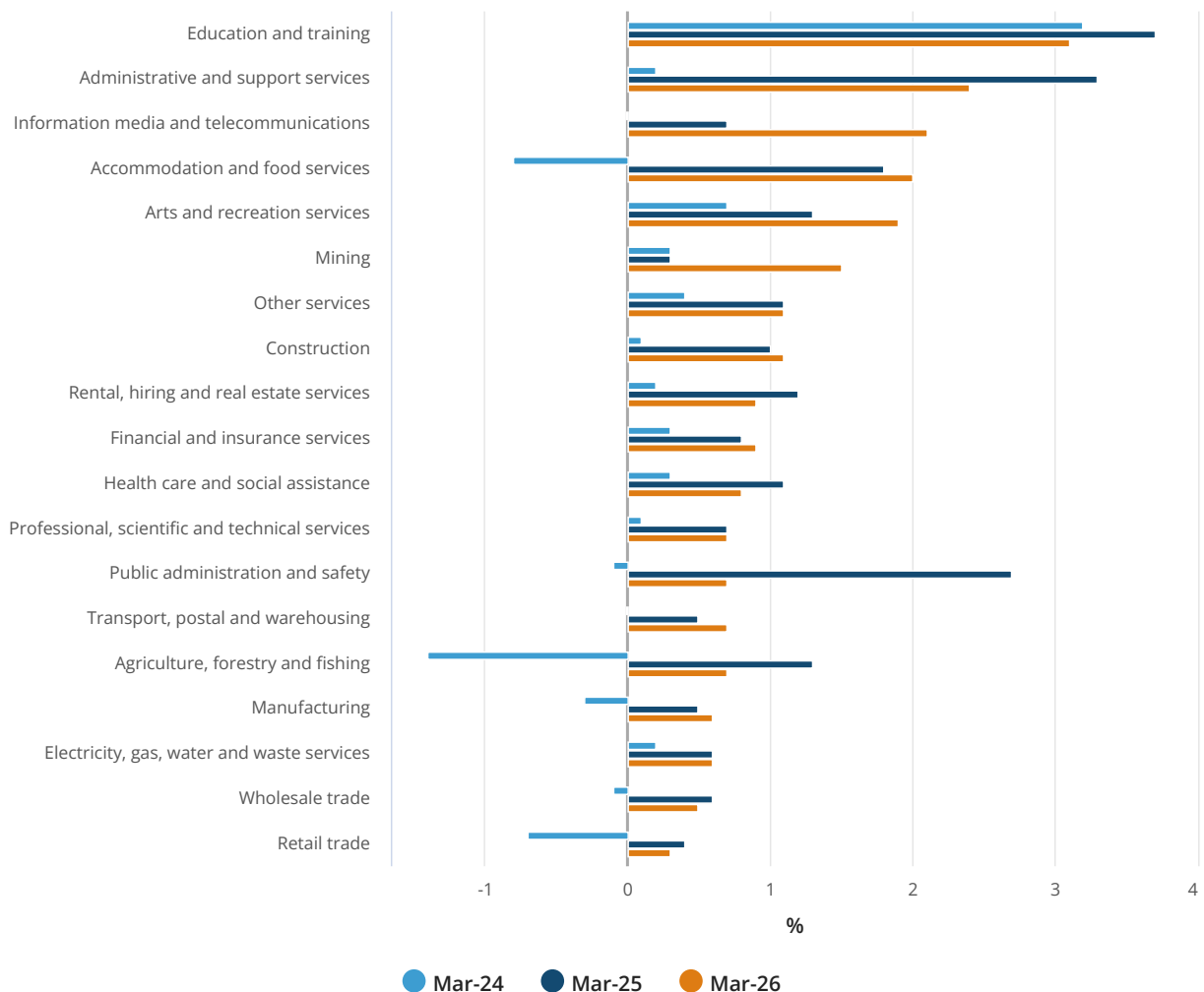
Education and training saw the largest increase of 39,600 employee jobs and +3.1%.

Employee jobs, by industry

	Jan-26 ('000)	Feb-26 ('000)	Mar-26 ('000)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	224	225	227
Mining	243	244	248
Manufacturing	850	858	863
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	154	155	156
Construction	1,085	1,106	1,118
Wholesale trade	597	600	603
Retail trade	1,471	1,444	1,449

	Jan-26 ('000)	Feb-26 ('000)	Mar-26 ('000)
Accommodation and food services	1,249	1,268	1,293
Transport, postal and warehousing	534	534	538
Information media and telecommunications	204	206	210
Financial and insurance services	550	553	558
Rental, hiring and real estate services	289	293	296
Professional, scientific and technical services	1,220	1,237	1,246
Administrative and support services	985	1,023	1,047
Public administration and safety	982	988	995
Education and training	1,194	1,263	1,303
Health care and social assistance	2,426	2,471	2,490
Arts and recreation services	280	289	295
Other services	522	529	535
All industries	15,058	15,286	15,470

Month change in employee jobs, by industry (a) (b)



a. Industries are ranked by descending month change in March 2026.

b. Temporary roles created ahead of the May 2025 federal election contributed to higher month change in the Public administration and safety industry in March 2025.

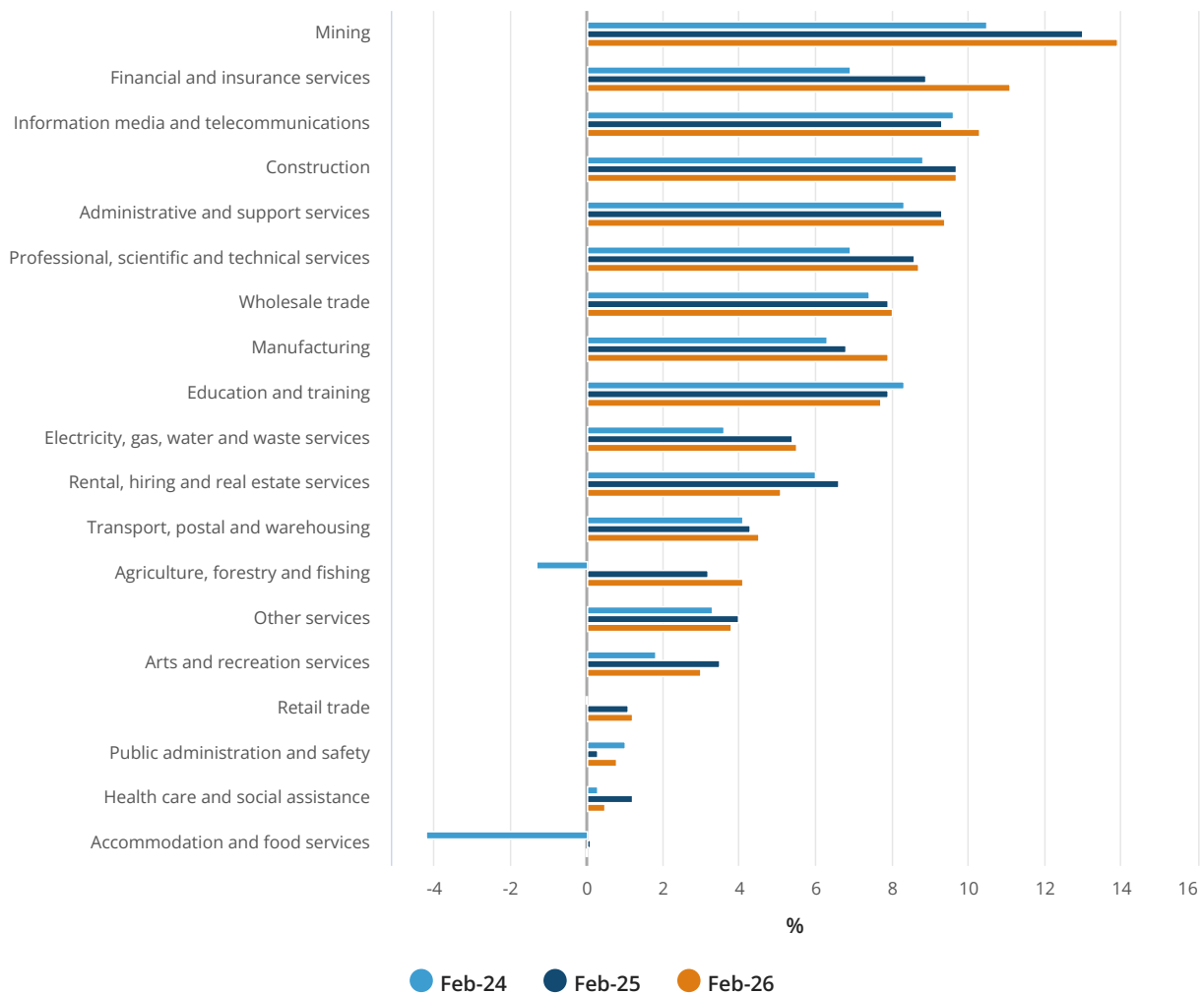
Month change, February



In February 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in 18 of 19 industries from January 2026.

Professional, scientific and technical services saw the largest increase of \$965m or +8.7%, driven by cyclical bonuses.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by industry (a) (b)



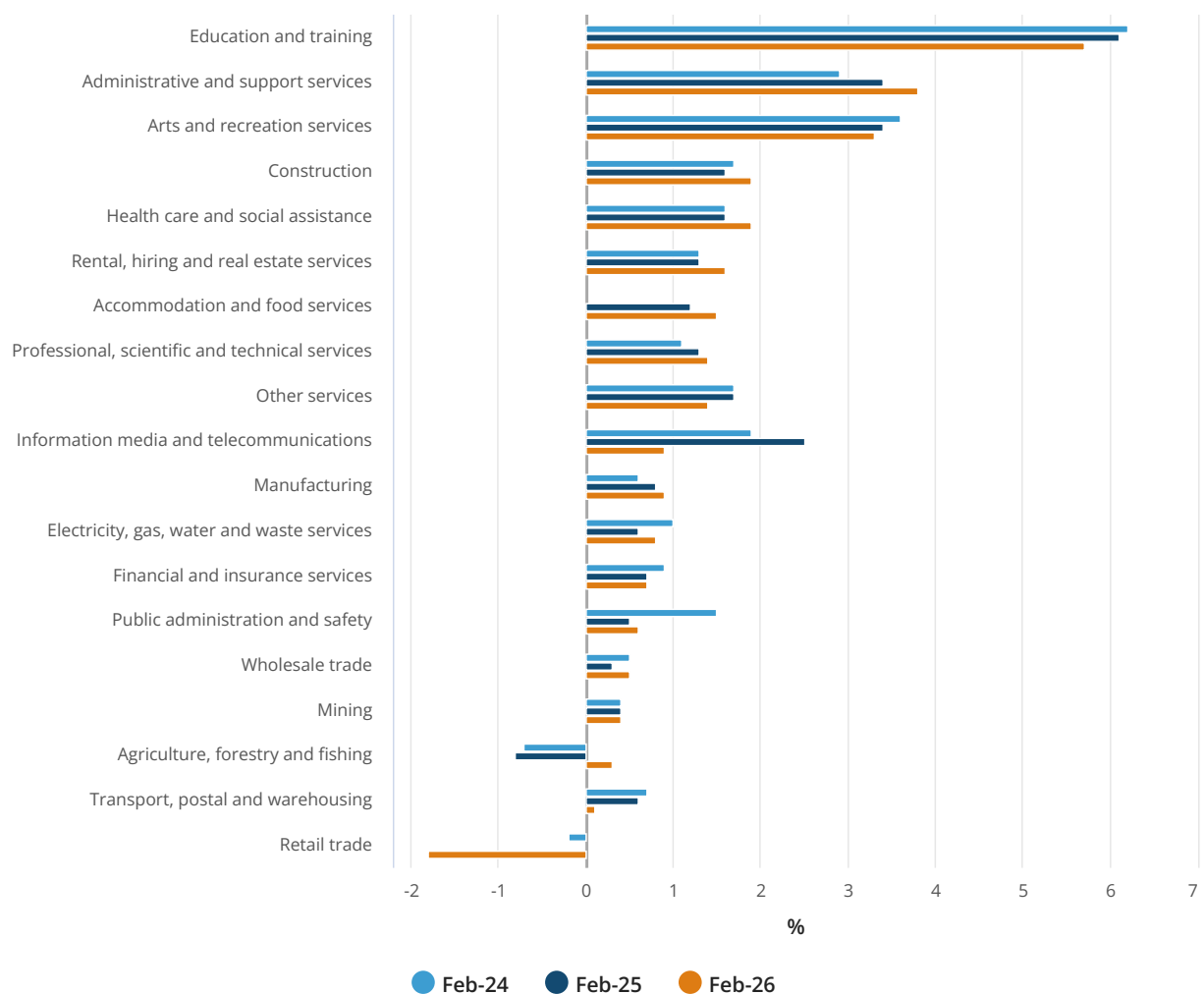
a. Industries are ranked by descending month change in February 2026.

b. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

In February 2026, employee jobs increased in 18 of 19 industries from January 2026.

Education and training saw the largest increase of 68,700 employee jobs and +5.7%.

Month change in employee jobs, by industry (a)



a. Industries are ranked by descending month change in February 2026.

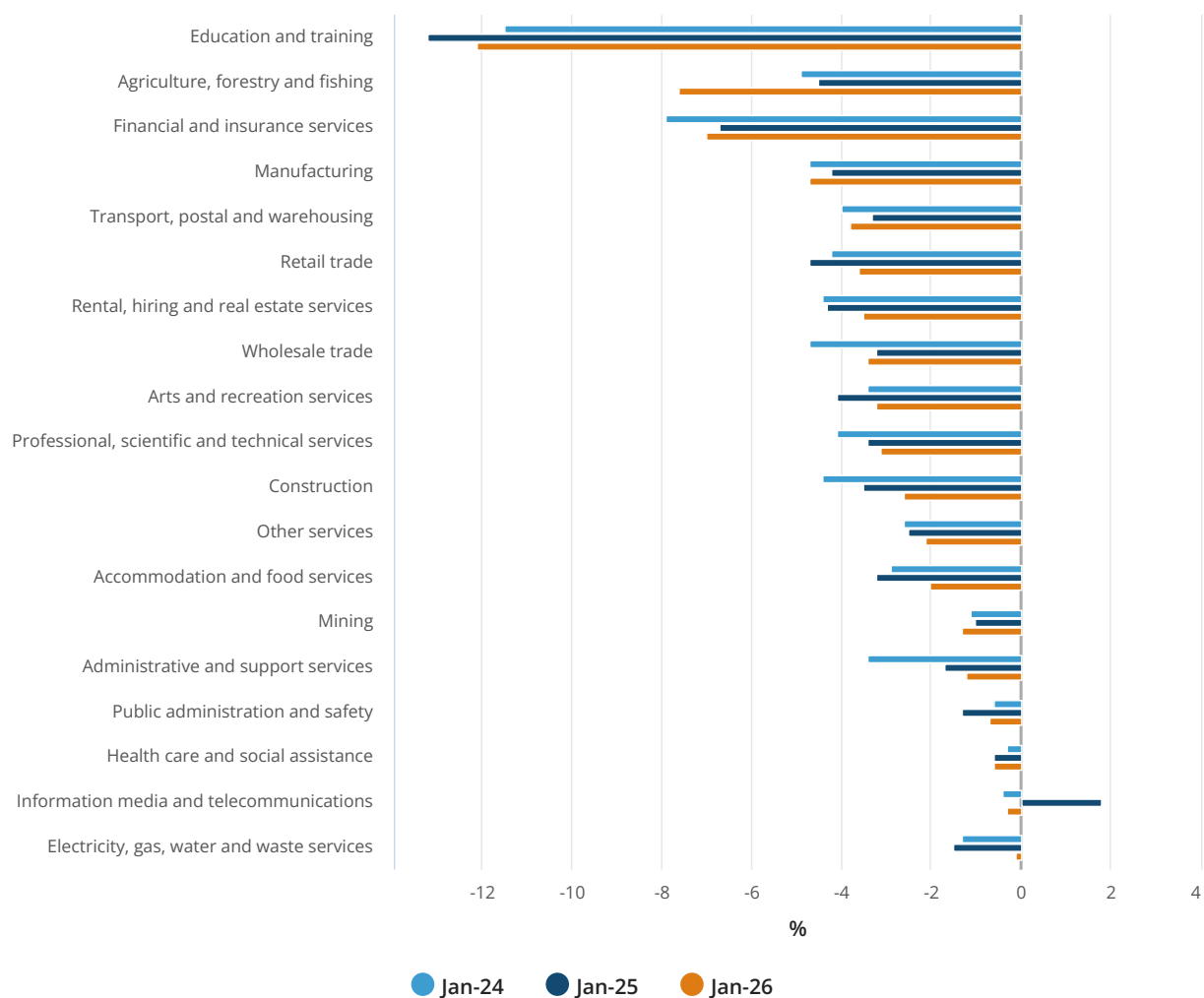
Month change, January



In January 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers decreased in all industries from December 2025.

Education and training saw the largest decrease of \$1,047m and -12.1%, due to reduced activity during the holiday period.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by industry (a)

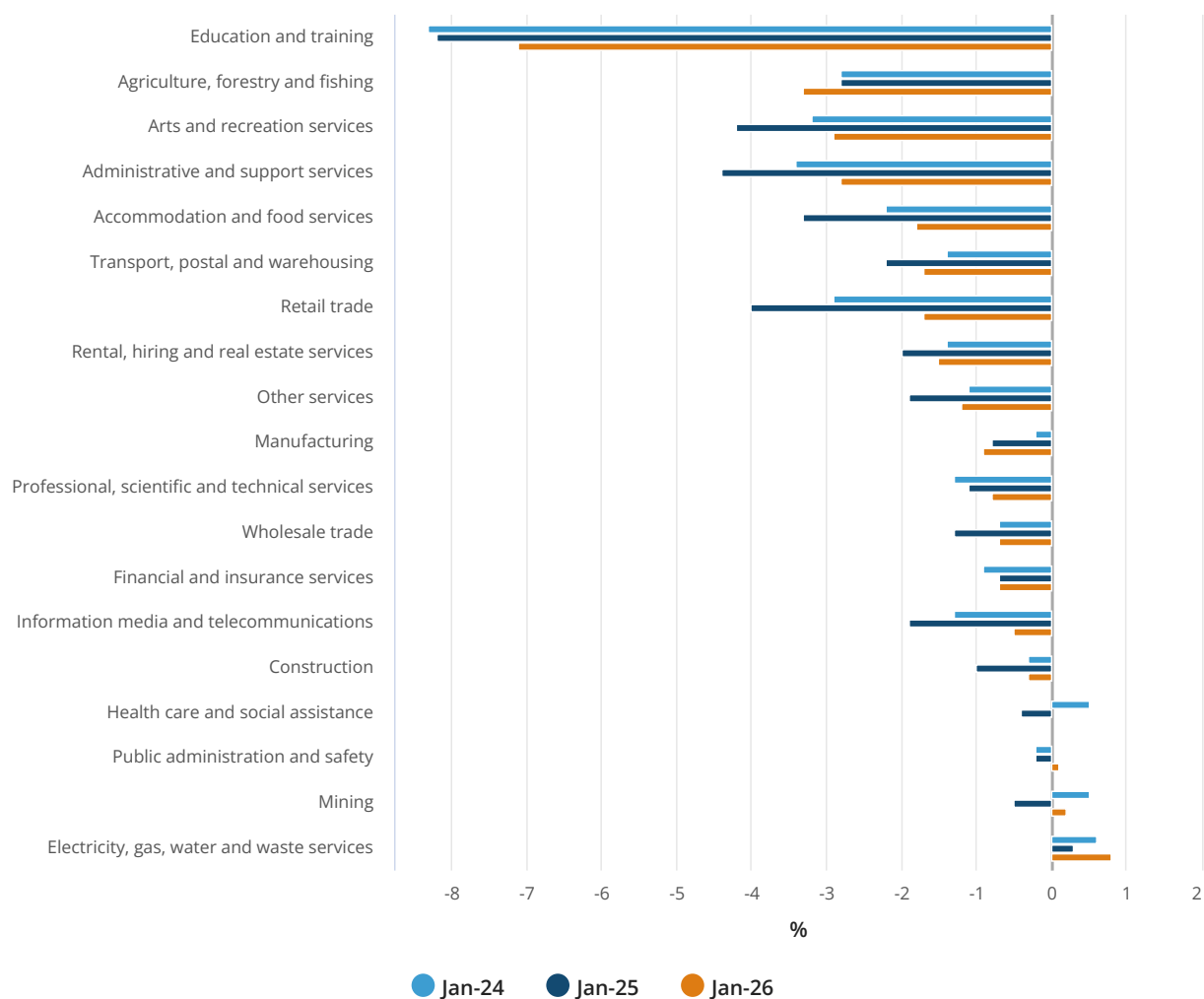


a. Industries are ranked by ascending month change in January 2026.

In January 2026, employee jobs decreased in 15 of 19 industries from December 2025.

Education and training saw the largest decrease of 91,100 employee jobs and -7.1%.

Month change in employee jobs, by industry (a)



a. Industries are ranked by ascending month change in January 2026.

Employment size

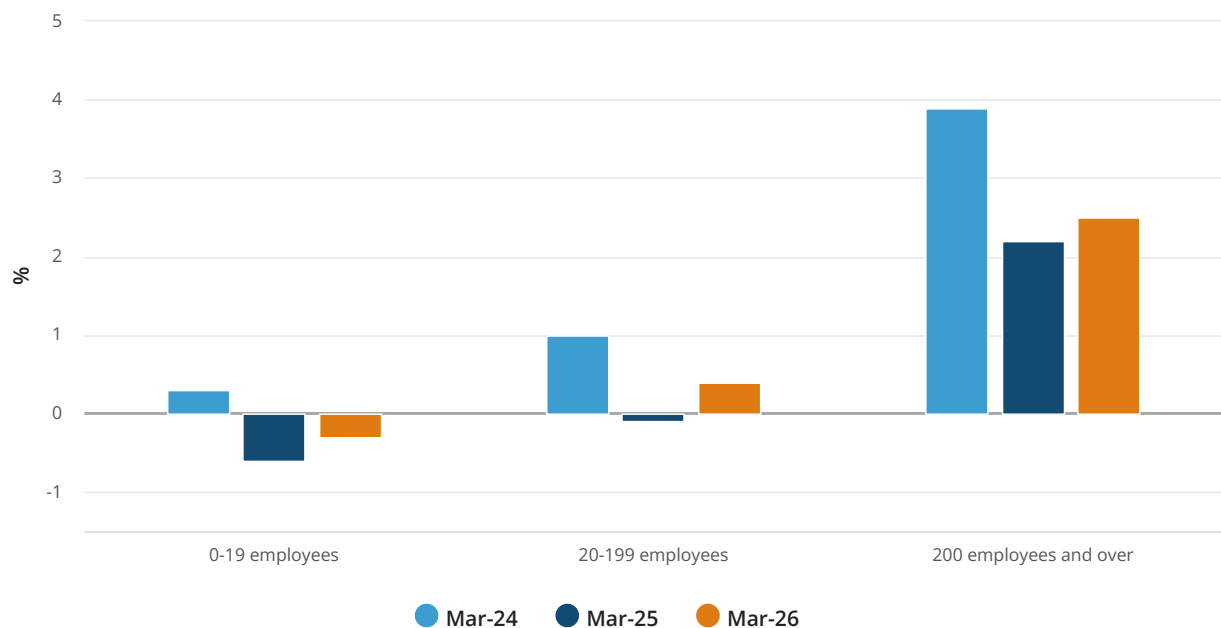
In March 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in 2 of 3 employment size groups from February 2026.

Businesses with 200 employees and over saw the largest increase of \$1,443m and +2.5%.

Total wages and salaries paid by employers, by employment size

	Jan-26 (\$m)	Feb-26 (\$m)	Mar-26 (\$m)
0-19 employees	21,812	23,270	23,190
20-199 employees	26,890	28,918	29,044
200 employees and over	54,414	56,882	58,326
All sizes	103,116	109,070	110,560

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by employment size (a)



a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

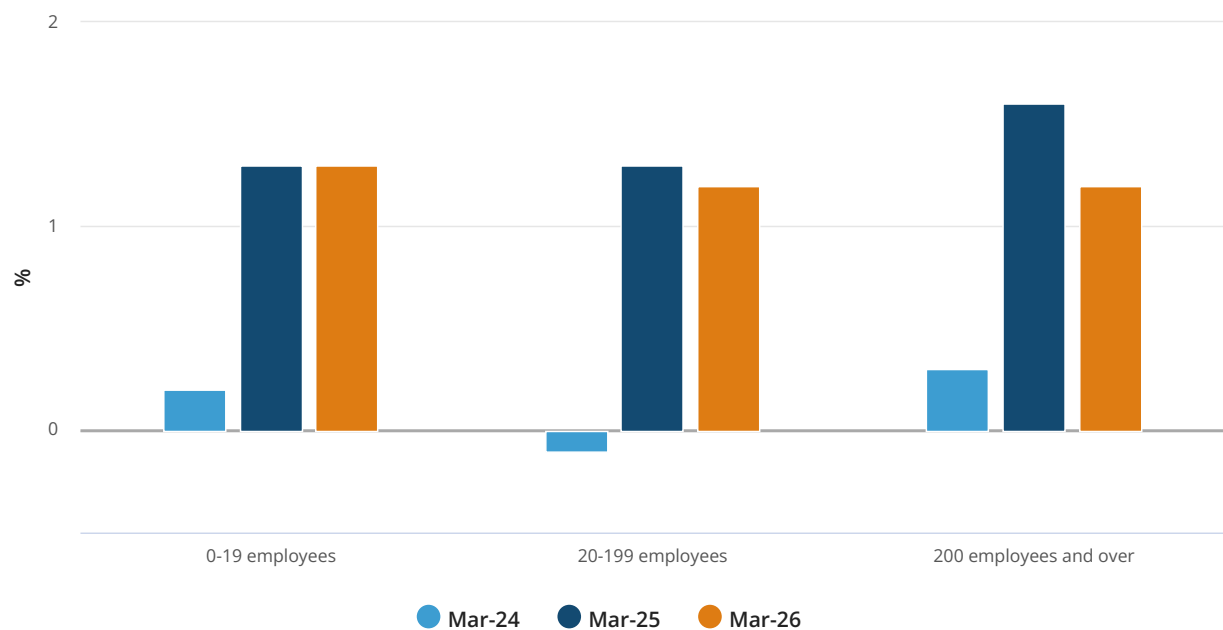
In March 2026, employee jobs increased in all employment size groups from February 2026.

Businesses with 200 employees and over saw the largest increase of 83,000 employee jobs or +1.2%.

Employee jobs, by employment size

	Jan-26 ('000)	Feb-26 ('000)	Mar-26 ('000)
0-19 employees	4,001	4,082	4,134
20-199 employees	3,962	4,030	4,079
200 employees and over	7,094	7,174	7,257
All sizes	15,058	15,286	15,470

Month change in employee jobs, by employment size



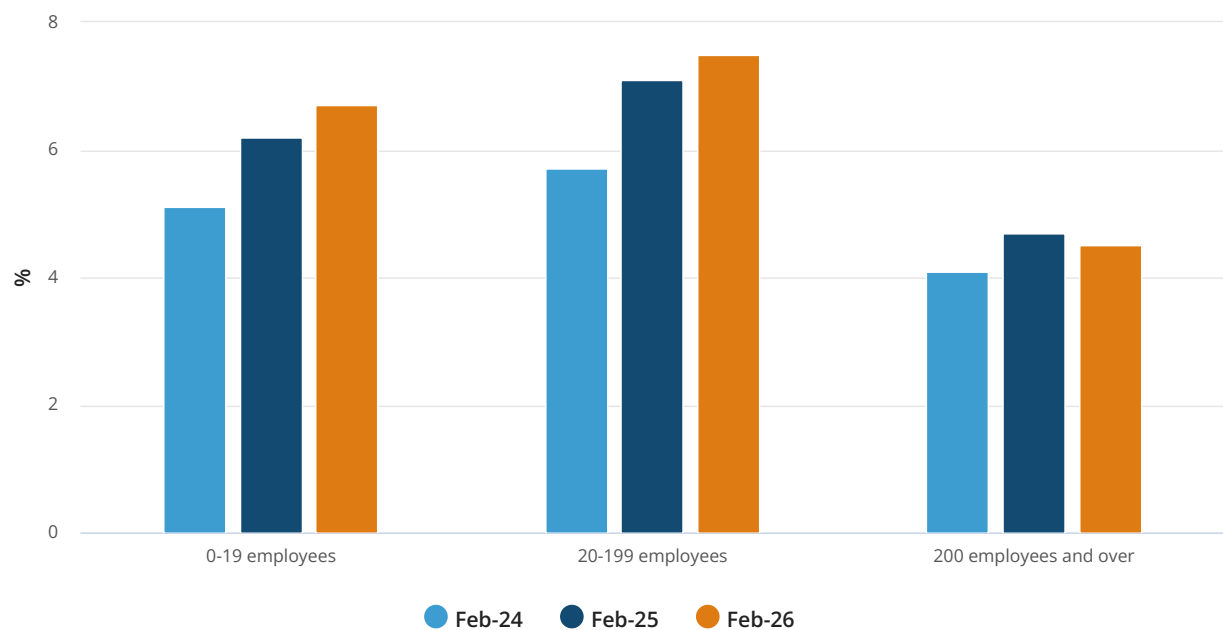
Month change, February



In February 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers increased in all employment size groups from January 2026.

Businesses with 200 employees and over saw the largest increase of \$2,469m or +4.5%.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by employment size (a)

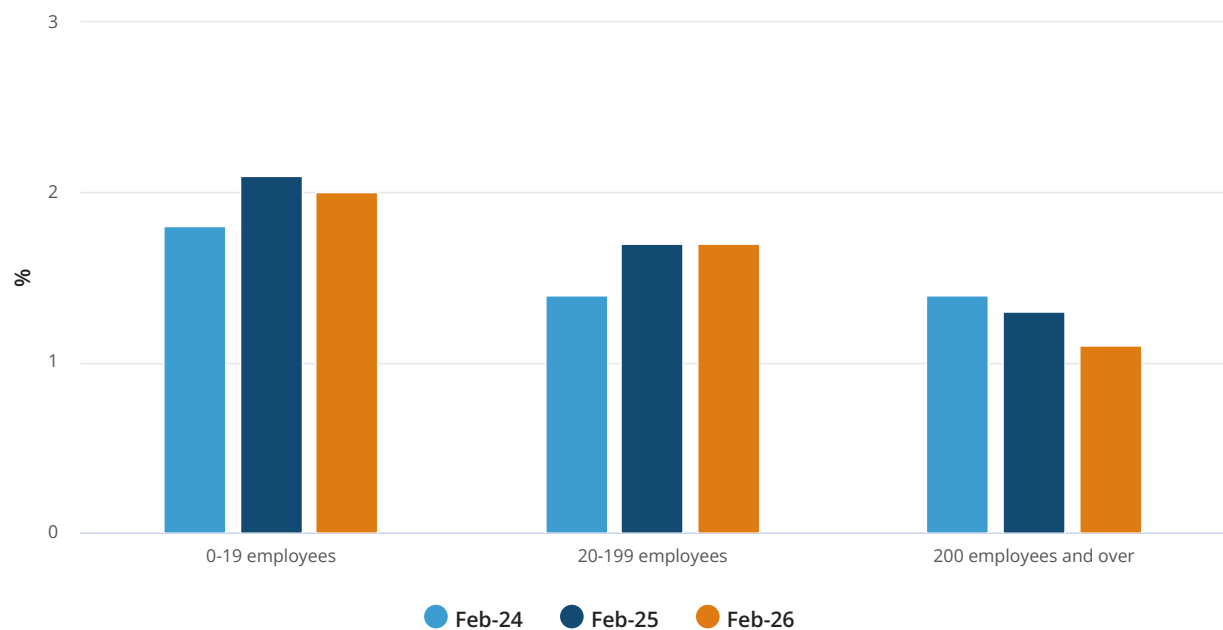


a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

In February 2026, employee jobs increased in all employment size groups from January 2026.

Businesses with 0-19 employees saw the largest increase of 81,500 employee jobs and +2.0%.

Month change in employee jobs, by employment size



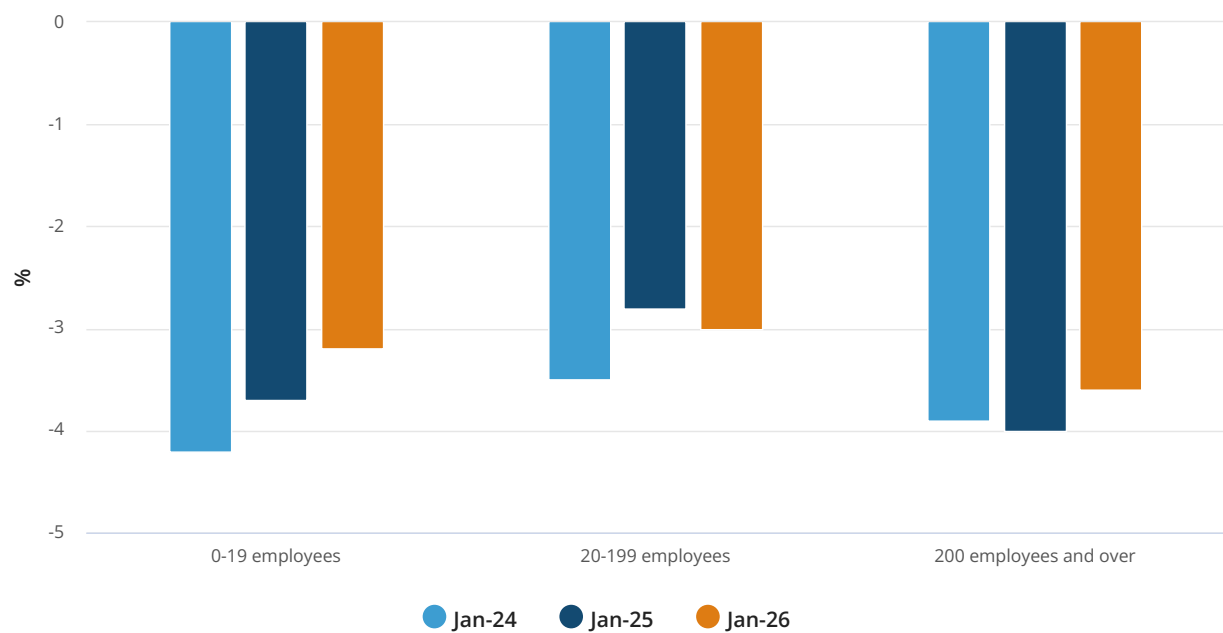
Month change, January



In January 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers decreased in all employment size groups from December 2025.

Businesses with 200 employees and over saw the largest decrease of \$2,032m and -3.6%.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by employment size



In January 2026, employee jobs decreased in all employment size groups from December 2025.

Businesses with 200 employees and over saw the largest decrease of 106,300 employee jobs or -1.5%.

Month change in employee jobs, by employment size



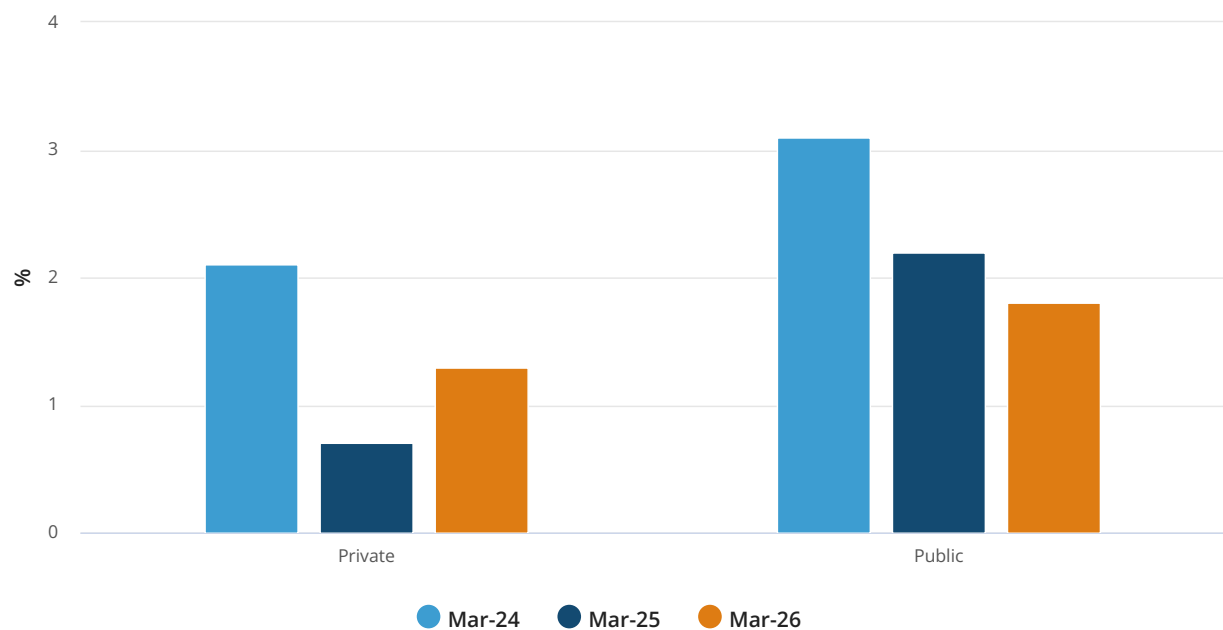
Sector

In March 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers rose in both sectors from February 2026.

Total wages and salaries paid by employers, by sector

	Jan-26 (\$m)	Feb-26 (\$m)	Mar-26 (\$m)
Private	81,348	87,036	88,137
Public	21,768	22,034	22,423
All sectors	103,116	109,070	110,560

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by sector (a)



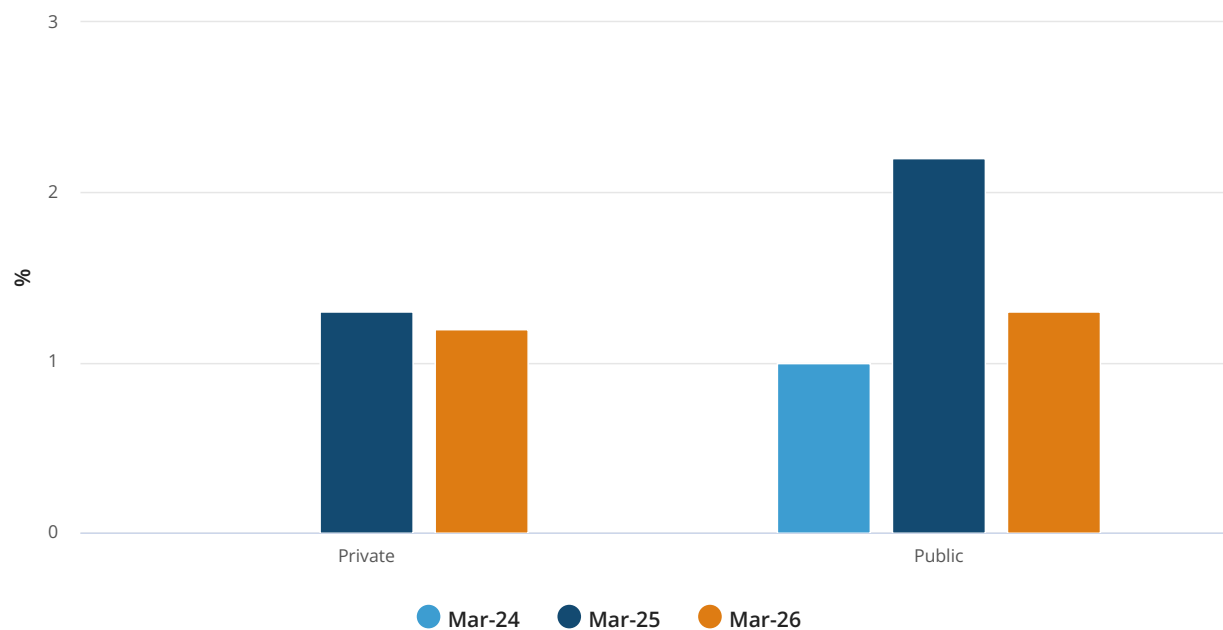
a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation).

In March 2026, employee jobs rose in both sectors from February 2026.

Employee jobs, by sector

	Jan-26 ('000)	Feb-26 ('000)	Mar-26 ('000)
Private	12,522	12,705	12,857
Public	2,535	2,581	2,613
All sectors	15,058	15,286	15,470

Month change in employee jobs, by sector (a)



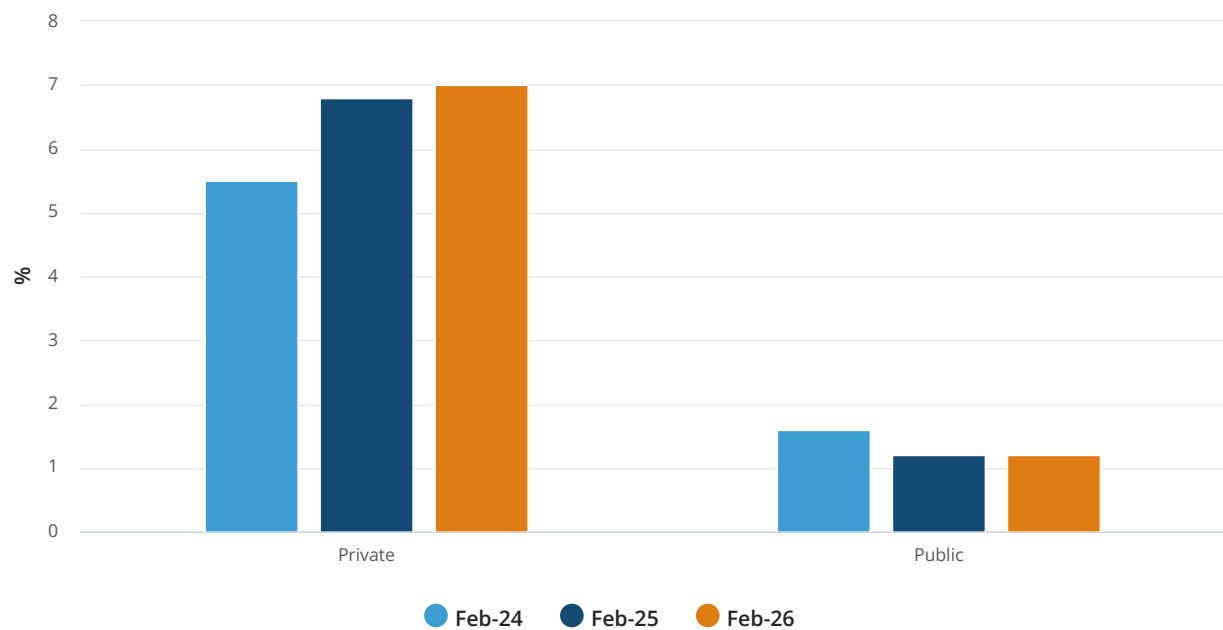
a. Temporary roles created ahead of the May 2025 federal election contributed to higher Public sector month change in March 2025.

Month change, February



In February 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers rose in both sectors from January 2026.

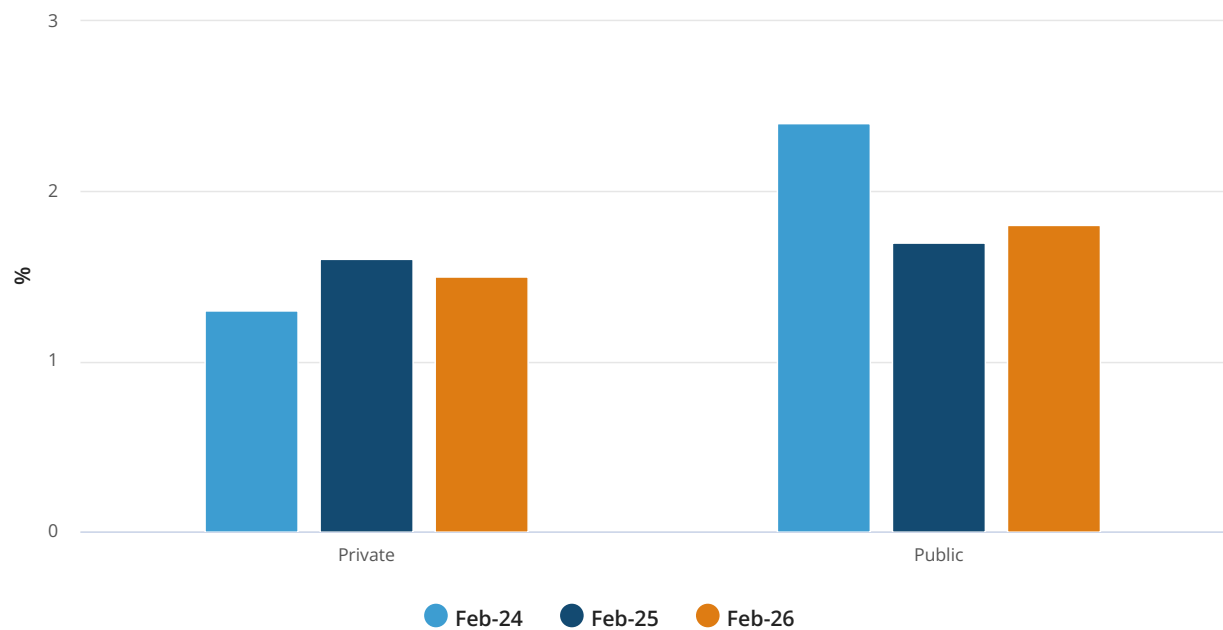
Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by sector (a)



a. The leap year day in February 2024 alters the seasonal change usually seen in February and March. For more information see the leap year effect section within [Factors affecting interpretation \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026#factors-affecting-interpretation\)](#).

In February 2026, employee jobs rose in both sectors from January 2026.

Month change in employee jobs, by sector

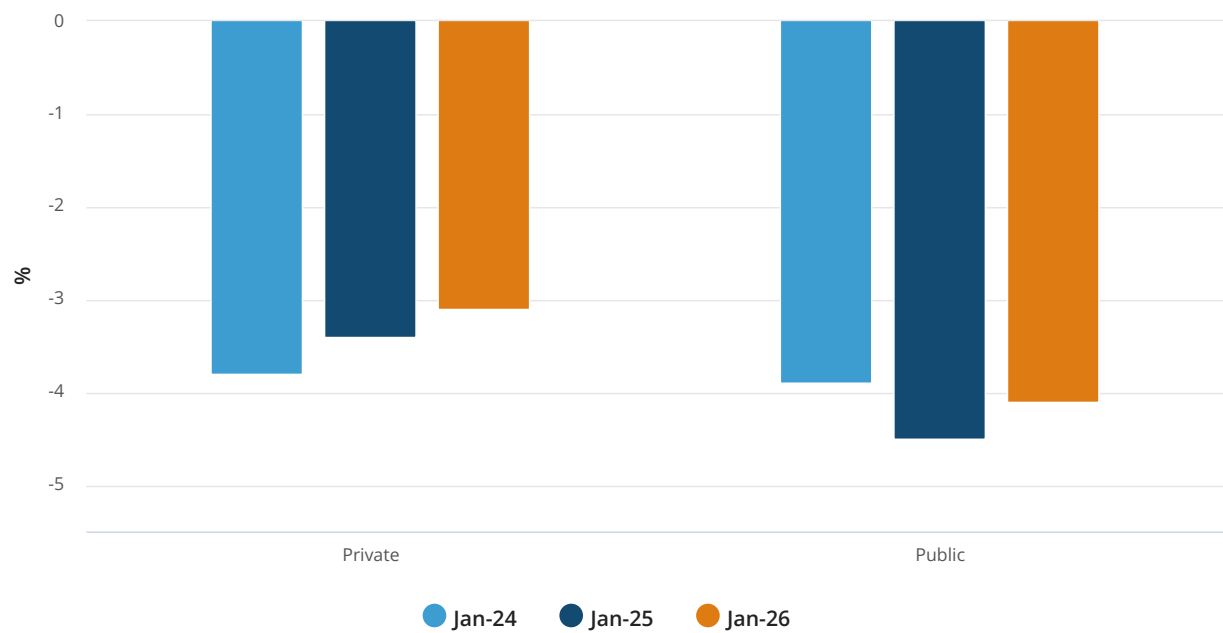


Month change, January



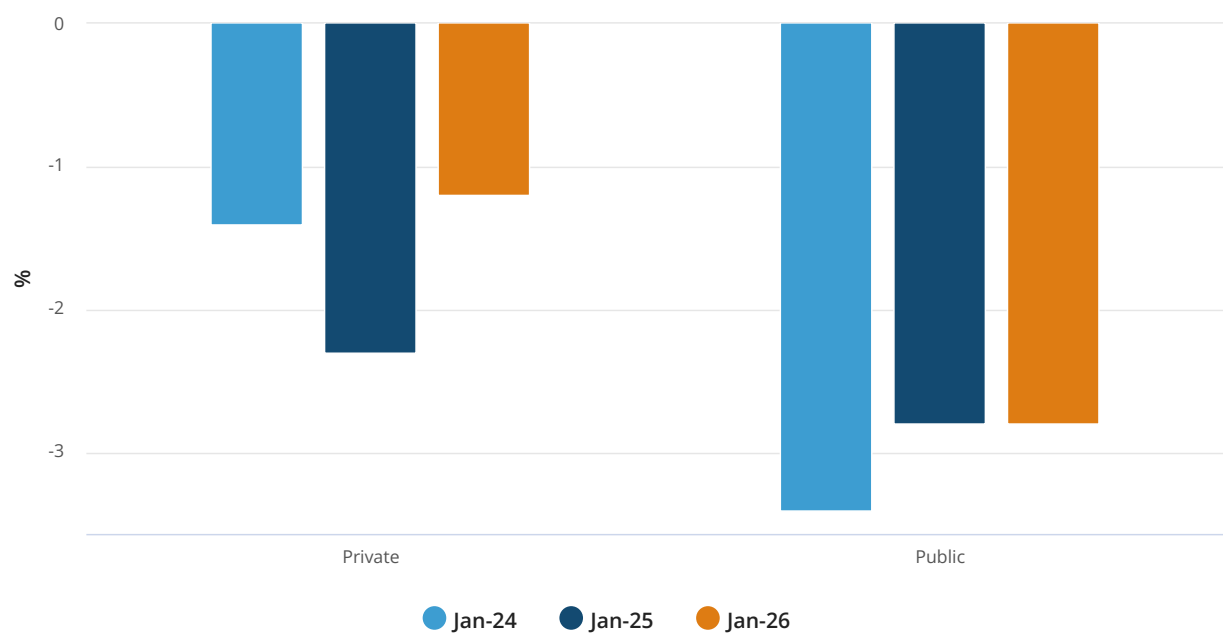
In January 2026, total wages and salaries paid by employers fell in both sectors from December 2025.

Month change in total wages and salaries paid by employers, by sector



In January 2026, employee jobs fell in both sectors from December 2025.

Month change in employee jobs, by sector



Data downloads

Table 1. Total wages and salaries paid by employers, percentage change

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[225.96 KB]

(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator/mar-2026/MEEIDC01.xlsx)

Table 2. Total wages and salaries paid by employers, level

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[179.78 KB]

(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator/mar-2026/MEEIDC02.xlsx)

Table 3. Employee jobs, percentage change

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[56.27 KB]

(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator/mar-2026/MEEIDC03.xlsx)

Table 4. Employee jobs, level

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[40.57 KB]

(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator/mar-2026/MEEIDC04.xlsx)

All data cubes

[↓ Download ZIP](#)

[451.07 KB]

(/statistics/labour/earnings-and-working-conditions/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator/mar-2026/MEEI_AL L.zip)

Article archive

[Monthly employee jobs: New insights on wages and salaries growth](#) (/articles/monthly-employee-jobs-new-insights-wages-and-salaries-growth) (February 2026)

Methodology

Scope

Wages and salaries paid by active employing businesses and organisations to their employees in the Australian economy.

Geography

Data is available for:

- Australia total
 - States and territories
-

Source

Australian Tax Office (ATO) Single Touch Payroll (STP) administrative data combined with ABS Business Register data.

Collection method

The ATO provides selected employer and employee level data from the STP system to the ABS. These data are combined with employer population and characteristics data from quarterly ABS Business Register snapshots.

Concepts, sources and methods

Wages and salaries are gross amounts (before tax and deductions) and include wages, salaries and allowances paid through Australian payrolls.

Employee jobs represent the number of employees who received wages or salaries during the reference month.

History of changes

Employee job estimates were added in the February 2026 release.

[View full methodology \(/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026\)](/methodologies/monthly-employee-earnings-indicator-methodology/mar-2026)